

Happy Easter Stories



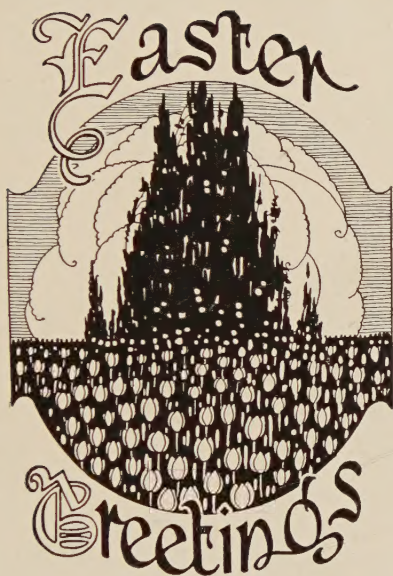
MILD WINTER

Edited and Pictured by
"JUST RIGHT" AUTHORS and ARTISTS





WINTER



Happy Easter Stories

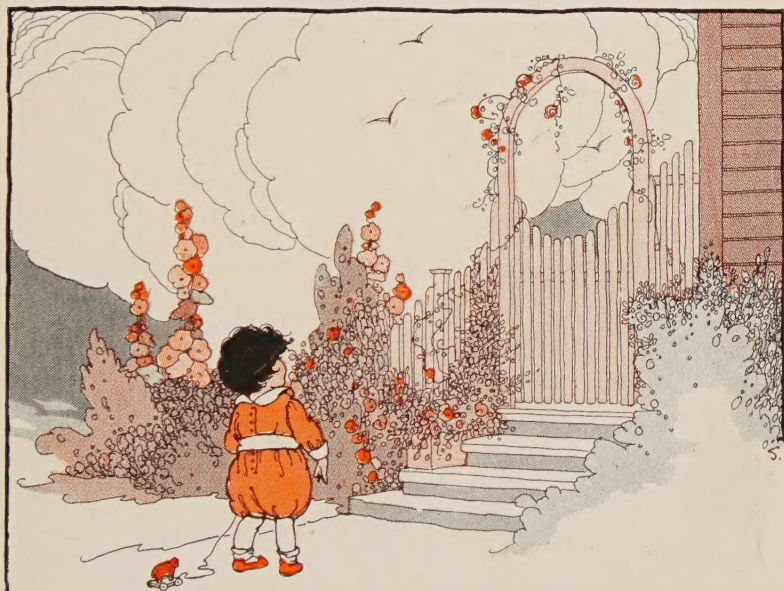


Even the Angels Heard the Song

HAPPY EASTER STORIES

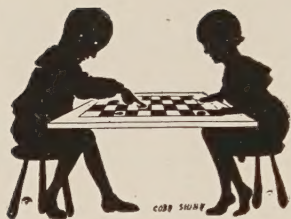
STORY-HOUR TALES FROM "JUST RIGHT" EDITIONS

With Cover Drawings By Milo Winter



EDITED AND PICTURED BY "JUST RIGHT"
AUTHORS AND ARTISTS

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OTHER "SUPERIOR" TITLES

Merry Christmas Stories
Today's Stories of Yesterday
Runaway Nanny
Dentons Program Book

At the end of each story the reader will note that the story has been selected from one of our own Just Right Books. The title and author are named.

Published in the U. S. A.



FOREWORD

The Spirit of Springtime Book

"Happy Easter Stories" is a collection of stories that will develop children's greater interest in Easter.

The stories have been selected with judicious care with emphasis placed upon variety of subject matter, method of treatment and interest.

They are essentially of Easter in their setting. It is the hope of the publisher that this book will serve to create a true picture of Easter in the minds of children.

True thoughts of nature's spring awakening are pictured for the reader.

The Publisher.

NOTE

The "Easter Bunny" story reprinted with the kind permission of *Woman's Home Companion*.

IN APPRECIATION

For the adapted drawings used in this book to the artists as follows: Frances Kerr Cook, Mildred Lyon, Sue Seely, Uldene Shriver Trippe, Joseph E. Dash, Marjorie Howe Dixon, Violet Moore Higgins, and Marguerite M. Jones.



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*Hunting for Easter Eggs
See Story-Game (An Easter Party)*



WHY ROBIN REDBREAST SINGS AT EASTER TIME

There is a beautiful legend translated from the Swedish which tells how, when the Lord created all things, the Robin was not given his red breast, but was told to earn it.

For thousands of years he and his babies, and the babies before them, tried in every way to earn red breasts.

First they tried to redden their breasts with a glow of song, but that did no good. Then they fought, trying to flame their breasts with the love of battle, but that did no good.

Their breasts remained gray until they almost gave up, and were in despair of ever getting red breasts.

One day a Robin did win a red breast for himself, and for all the Robins that came after him.

On the day when Christ was crucified, far away in Palestine, a little

Robin sat in sorrow on a hillside outside Jerusalem and saw Jesus suffering on the cross.

The Robin's little breast swelled with sadness when he saw the crown of thorns placed on Christ's brow, and finally the little bird was so filled with pity that, although he had never before dared come near anyone, he flew round and round the cross until, at last, darting down, he pulled a thorn from the brow of the dying Christ.

As Robin did this kind act the blood from the wound made by the thorn stained his breast so deeply that when he flew away his breast was a bright red.

When at last he reached his nest Robin found that at last he had earned, for himself, and for all the Robins, the red breasts for which they had always longed. From that day to this the Robin has always been known as "Robin Redbreast."

So, by doing a kind deed, the Robin had been able to do what no other Robin had been able to do, either through courage in battle, or through song.

But this beautiful legend does not tell us what happened to the little Robin after he came to his nest, and this is the story of why Robin Redbreast sings at Easter time.

After the Robin returned to his tiny nest he wept and wept, yet why he was so sad his babies could not understand.

“Dear Father Redbreast,” said his little ones, “Why do you weep? See the beautiful red breast you have earned for all the robins. We love you so much that we cannot bear to see you unhappy.”

But Robin Redbreast only bowed his head lower, and sighed.

“Why do you weep, dear Robin?” asked his little wife. “I am so proud of your red breast. Do not weep, but sing for us again.”

But Robin only wept the more. For two nights and one day he sat in his nest

and was sad. At last the morning of the third day dawned, and it was the Sabbath.

“Will you not be glad today?” asked his little wife. “Look! The sun is high in the heavens.

“The air is sweet with perfume. The brook sings, and the sky smiles. Can you not be glad and sing?”

“Dear little wife,” said Robin, as he lifted up his head and looked at the beautiful sky. “I want you to be happy, although I do not think I can ever be happy again.

“The time that I earned my red breast, I saw a sight which made me very

sad. I saw the one they called Christ dying on the cross, and all I could do was to pull out one thorn from His brow.

“I cannot help being sad, dear little wife, but I will fly away and try to get back a little of happiness, for I cannot bear to make you and the baby Robins suffer with me.

“I shall try to come back with a lighter heart, and perhaps even a song for you.”

So, over the hillsides and valleys of Jerusalem flew Robin Redbreast.

Though the sky was clear and the sun shone, and the brooks sang, Robin was heavy hearted. Somehow his little wings

led him right back to the spot where he had seen Jesus buried. But when he reached the place, Lo! the stone had been rolled away. And when Robin's little black eyes pierced through the darkness, he saw Christ, in shining robes of whiteness, standing before him.

At once the heavy sadness left Robin's breast, and forth from his tiny throat there poured a song, and such a song! It was a wonderful song of love and joy and cheer.

Robin sang of life and victory. Even the angels heard the song, for it was a song of heaven itself.

Back to his tiny nest Robin flew, the

song of joy still pouring from his throat. Mother Robin saw him coming and chirped her joy. And the tiny babies chirped cheerfully to greet him. The little nest home was full of cheer.

“Robin is happy again! Robin is singing again!” sang Mother Robin, and all the little Robins chirped “Chee! Chee! Chee!”

“Rejoice and be glad, my loved ones!” sang Robin Redbreast. “The dear Christ is living. I am no longer sorrowful, for from death hath come life.

“From now on we Robins must welcome the glad Easter with song.



In Shining Robes of Whiteness, Standing Before Him



So Over the Hillsides and Valleys



“We must sing of the bright flowers and budding trees.

“We must sing darkness away, and sing weariness away, and sing death itself away.

“Easter shall be the happiest time of the year for all the Robin Redbreasts.”

And from that day to this, whenever Easter time is close at hand, the little Robins far and near gather to sing the glad song of spring, and to tell in their song of how life comes forth in buds and flowers and leaves, as spring takes the place of winter.

From “Three Books,” by Edna Groff Deihl.



EASTER IN THE GARDEN

The Garden was all ready for Easter. Each flower there had been given a new dress or a pretty new hat.

The Lily wore white with ruffles around the edge of her skirt. The Tulip children had gay green dresses and bon-

nets of many different colors, red, and pink, and gold. There were the Daisies that lived in the Garden, and they had been given wide hats with white brims and yellow crowns. Even the young Crocuses who lived in the grass of the lawn wore bright Easter caps, purple, and orange, and white with stripes.

The sky was blue and the sun shining and the Garden should have been very happy indeed on Easter morning, but it was not. It had heard the voices of the Children on the eve before.

“Tomorrow you shall be picked!” the Children had said, as if the flowers would be pleased to know that.

But the Garden did not want to lose its flowers.

The flowers themselves did not want to be picked.

“The Lily says that no Child knows how to hold her long, slim stem,” buzzed an early Bumble Bee who had been feasting inside her cup of sweets. “She says that Children break the stems of flowers.”

“The Tulip says that a Child would crush her bonnet in its large, fat hand,” chirped a song sparrow who had just arrived in the tulip bed.

“All the Tulips have been given beautiful new bonnets this spring and they

want to keep them looking fresh for Easter.”

“The Daisies are full of dew drop tears,” croaked the Garden Toad, who had lived so many years under the stone beside the path that he was very wise. “And I know why they are crying.

“Children always pull the Daisies’ white hat rims off to see if someone loves them.

“They ought to know that everybody loves a good child.

“The Daisies are right in not wishing to have their hats taken off.”

So the morning that should have been the happiest one of the whole year for a



TULIPS

*The Tulip Children Had Gay Green Dresses and Bonnets
of Many Different Colors*



*The Daisies Are Full of Dew Drop Tears
Croaked the Garden Toad*

Garden that has come up in all its colors through the brown earth, was sad.

And shortly after breakfast out came the Children with the gardening shears. Yes, they were picking the flowers.

“Of what use are my Easter ruffles!” breathed the Lily as the oldest Child held her by her long, green stalk. “Why did I wear them today?”

“Now I shall be pulled to pieces while this Boy counts my petals,” sighed each Easter Daisy.

And the Tulips, held in a bunch in the warm hand of the youngest Child, nodded their bonnets sadly.

“We might just as well have stayed under-ground,” they thought. “Where

are we going, and who will see our new garments?"

And the flowers held in the Children's hands left the garden and went down the lane. But there was a Robin in the apple tree in the lane who sang to them.

"Cheer-up, cheer-up!" sang the Robin on Easter morning.

And there was a great bell at the end of the lane. It hung high in its steeple and as soon as it saw the flowers it began to sing too.

"Ding-a-ling. Bells shall ring,
Children in their arms shall bring
Flowers, promise of the spring."

That was the message of the church bell that welcomed the Children, and



There Must Be Flowers on Easter Day

as they went up the steps of the church the flowers were suddenly glad that they had been picked.

The church was full of other Children waiting for them.

There must be flowers on Easter Day, picked flowers, to tell that beauty will come from the deep darkness of the earth. And the Children had carried them so carefully.

The Lily, the Tulips and the Daisies were now as happy as if they had enjoyed their new dresses only in the Garden.

From "Little Men and Women Stories," by Carolyn Sherwin Bailey.



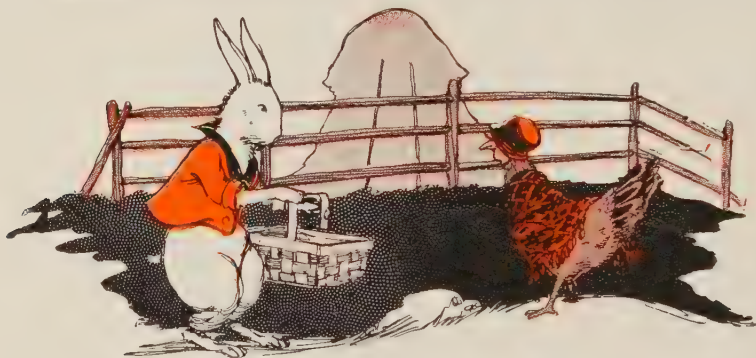


THE EASTER BUNNY

Mother Tiny-Tail sat in her little red plush rocking chair rocking to and fro singing:

“Alas! alack! I am old and gray,
And have no eggs for Easter Day.”

Just then a Funny Bunny came by with a hop, and a skip, and a bound and said, “Oh, Mother Tiny-Tail, no eggs for Easter, no eggs for the Tiny-Tails? That will never do!” So saying,



He Went to the Little Brown Hen Who Lives in the Lane

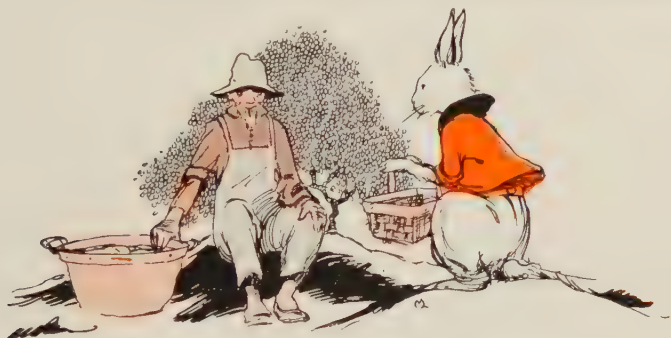
he borrowed Mother Tiny-Tail's market basket, and went hippety-hop to the Little Brown Hen who lives in the lane, saying:

"Please give me eggs now that I ask it,
Enough to fill my market basket."

The Little Brown Hen said:

"If you will bring me an ear of corn,
I'll fill your basket by Easter morn."

Then Funny Bunny went with a hop, and a skip, and a jump to the little old Farmer who lived in the field and said:



Please Give Me Corn

“Please give me corn, now that I ask it,
Enough to fill my market basket.”

The Farmer replied:

“Bring me a sack of meal all ground,
I will fill your basket safe and sound.”

Funny Bunny went with a pitter,
patter, pitter, patter, until he came to
the Miller, and said:

“Please give me a meal-bag, since I ask it,
Enough to fill my market basket.”

The Miller laughed until his old fat
sides shook and answered:

“Your request sounds rather funny,
I will give you meal for money.”

Then Funny Bunny sat down on a stone to think.

How was he going to get some money?

It was getting dark, and the Little Hill Men came out one by one, digging for fairy gold.

When Funny Bunny saw them he cried:

“Please give me money, since I ask it,
Enough to fill my market basket.”

Now, the Little Hill Men did not want to give something for nothing, so they sang:

“With a hop, skip, bound, measure our hill
And your empty basket we soon will fill.”

Of course, the Little Hill Men never dreamed that he would do it, so they went on digging for fairy gold.

Funny Bunny was in real earnest, for he thought of Mother Tiny-Tail rocking sadly to and fro in her red plush rocking chair, so

From the daisies to the apple tree,
Skippety-hoppety-skip went he.

My! how fast his legs could carry him!
He came back singing:

“Your hill’s as long, your hill’s as wide
As anyone would care to ride!”

The Little Hill Men were so surprised he had answered their question that they all stopped digging and crowded around Funny Bunny. “Click, click, click,” they dropped gold into his market basket.

Then he ran with a hop, skip and

jump to the Miller and bought a bag of meal.

He took the meal to the Farmer and bought the corn.

Then he took the corn to the Little Brown Hen, who lived in the lane, and she counted out one dozen, two dozen, three dozen, four dozen, five dozen beautiful white eggs.

They filled the market basket Funny Bunny was carrying.

When he reached home he set the market basket down in front of Mother Tiny-Tail, saying:

“I’m Funny Bunny, I cannot stay,
But I wish you a happy Easter Day.”



Click! Click! They Dropped Gold Into His Basket

Mother Tiny-Tail stopped rocking to and fro; but before she could say, "Thank you," Funny Bunny was hip-pety-hoppety, off and away.

Mother Tiny-Tail painted the Easter eggs and hid them everywhere.

On Easter morning all the Tiny-Tails cried, "Oh" and "Ah," for they found the Easter Eggs in their shoes, in their oatmeal bowls, and in the most unexpected places.

Just at that very minute Funny Bunny peeped in the window and cried, as he held up a wonderful sugary egg:

"Kindness comes back now and then,
See my Easter egg, from The Little Hill Men!"

Funny Bunny was always so kind to the Little Tiny-Tails that the Hill Men remembered him.

Then, with a twinkle of nose, and a dancing of toes, Funny Bunny went hippety-hoppety, off and away, singing:

“I really would not think it funny,
If you should call me an Easter Bunny.”

From “The Gingerbread Boy.”

LAURA ROUNTREE SMITH.





MRS. TOPKNOT'S EASTER SURPRISE

It was a long, cold winter and hard for the turkeys and hens out in the chicken yard. There were even a few flurries of snow in March but when the warm, bright days came Emily looked and looked for Mrs. Topknot, the old gray hen who always ate her corn from

the little girl's hand, but Mrs. Topknot was gone.

"Very likely she has found a nest for herself in some other yard where there is more sunshine," the hired man told Emily.

It seemed as if this must be true, and Emily missed the hen's cheerful cluck, cluck very much. She could not bear to go down to the yard with Mrs. Topknot gone, so Emily played in the garden. And most often of all she played her favorite game of castle in front of the big old myrtle tree.

The myrtle tree stood by itself and it was hollow at the roots.

Its long twining roots showed above the ground and were covered with moss as soft and beautiful as green velvet.

Emily could kneel down on the ground and peer inside the hollow tree trunk which had winding halls and passage-ways like a real castle, except that the dim, magic little hole made a castle only large enough for elves.

Emily loved to wait there in the sunshine with the garden so still about her and play that sometime the little fairy

folk who might live in such a castle would come out of the tree and talk to her.

This was what she was playing when a very odd thing happened.

The garden was very quiet. Not even the early wren was singing, but suddenly Emily, kneeling there at the roots of the old myrtle tree, heard a soft rustle deep down inside the tree castle.

It sounded as if someone very small were moving about inside.

Emily jumped, for she was not as brave a little girl as she would have liked to be. She ran into the house.

Now that the castle inside the myrtle

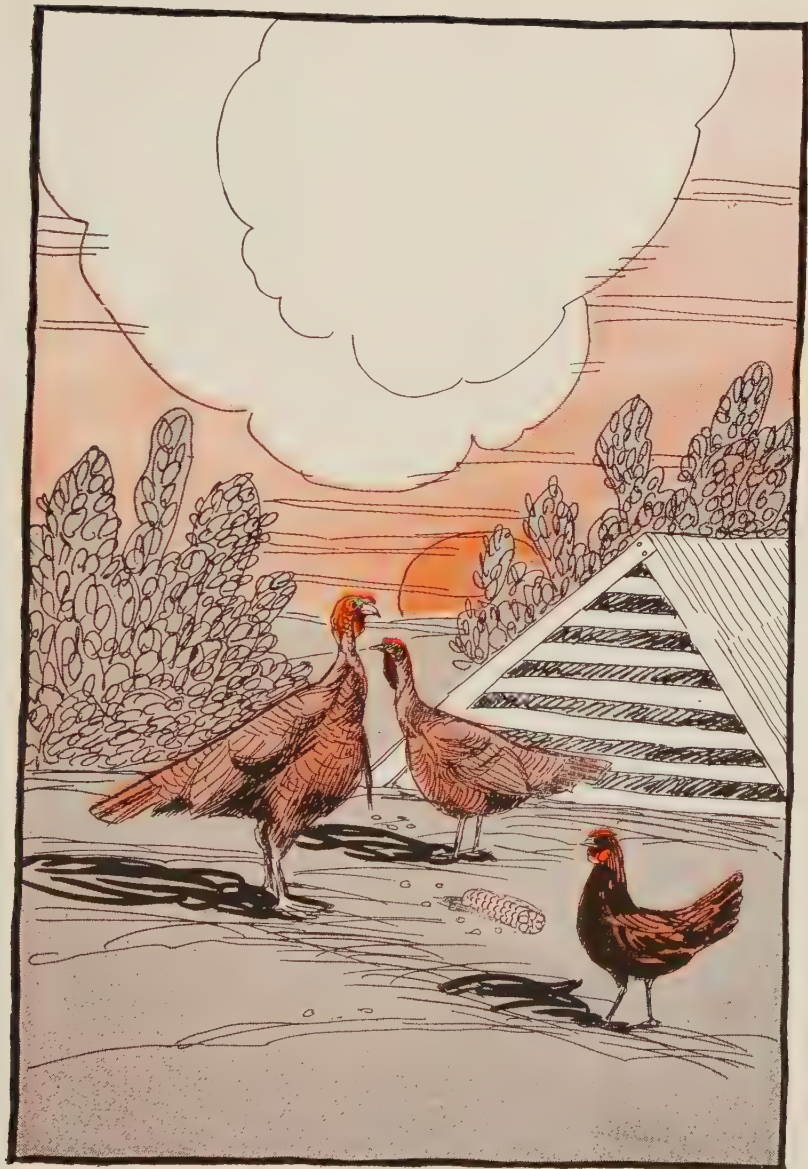
tree seemed to have some fairy in it, Emily was not quite sure that she was happy. She felt only fear.

But she felt curious the next day. She went alone again to the end of the garden and kneeled down and watched and listened at the roots of the old myrtle tree.

She did not have very long to wait.

Again she heard the rustling and then, before she had time to jump up and run, she had just a glimpse of gold. It was a soft gold as if the castle people wore robes of golden stuffs as soft as down.

How Emily ran! She did not wait to



For the Turkeys and Hens Out in the Chicken Yard

see how the elves or fairies or whatever they were looked, but she fairly raced into the house. "I shall never, never go to that part of the garden again," she said to herself and she was very much afraid.

But when Emily sat on the piazza and thought it over, she was ashamed of herself. She remembered how she had been afraid of the little hoot owl who called at night, until her father had taken her out into the garden to see the moon shining on the flower beds, so white and beautiful in the night, and she had found out how timid and harmless was the little hoot owl.



She Led Out Her New Brood of Yellow Chicks

Emily remembered how anything of which she had been afraid had seemed quite harmless when she walked up to it.

So she made up her mind in a few days to go again to the foot of the old myrtle tree, look deep down inside of it, and wait for the little folk to come out of their castle.

It was close to Easter Day. The garden was getting ready with its new green leaves and the snowdrops and crocuses showing above the ground like little ladies in white and lilac poke bonnets.

Emily walked very courageously up to the old myrtle tree and kneeled down and waited for the fairy folk inside to come out.

The rustling came again. Emily kept very quiet.

Then she had a glimpse of the golden cloaks. Still Emily did not run away. Then, oh, how wonderful, she heard a familiar sound! Cluck, cluck, cluck!

And out of the hollow at the roots of the myrtle tree walked old Mrs. Topknot, fussy and proud of herself as she led out her new brood of yellow chicks hatched out in that odd nest she had found for herself when the days were too cold for her in the chicken yard.

Emily took as many of the balls of gold feathers in her hands as she could

and ran with them to show the hired man. "Suppose that I had run away!" she thought, "and had missed Mrs. Topknot's Easter surprise." And Mrs. Topknot herself, leading the rest of her brood to the chicken yard to scratch, clucked to Emily, "Never be afraid, my dear."

From "The Wonderful Tree."

CAROLYN SHERWIN BAILEY.





THE BRAVEST FLOWER

It was very quiet out in the deep, deep woods—and very cold and gloomy, too. There was still a little snow, and not a tree had started to put on its spring bonnet yet.

But suddenly a tuft of moss cried out, “What’s that? Something woke me? It

sounds exactly as if someone was beginning to grow!"

"Your ears are nearer the ground than mine," said an old fir tree. "I heard nothing, but I'm sure, now you speak of it, I can see a little stir in the earth. Odd, isn't it?"

"Not at all," cried a gay, sweet voice. "It's me. I'm little, but I like to start things going, and I am so tired of the dark ground. A pleasant spring time to everybody!"

And Trailing Arbutus thrust her pretty pink head out into the light. "My, my," she went on, "it is good to be out in the world again."

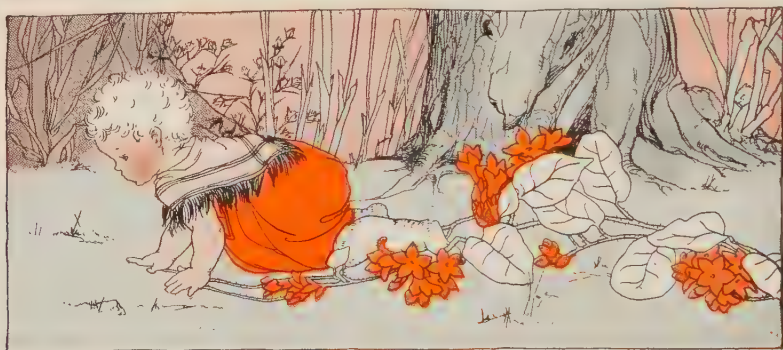
“I hope I’ll have a chance to get well rooted this year. I like to oblige people, and give them my blossoms, but it is rather hard when they pull me up roots and all. It doesn’t seem fair, either.”

“It’s not,” said the fir tree. “I’ll try and protect you.”

“And I’ll try and hide you,” said the moss.

“Thanks,” said Trailing Arbutus. And she grew fast, and became very beautiful, and one day two children, a boy and a girl, saw her and ran up, happy with joy.

“Take my blossoms—you’re welcome,” called the Trailing Arbutus, “but please



"Take My Blossoms—You're Welcome," Called the Trailing Arbutus

look out for my roots—leave them to me so I can grow another year."

And the children must have heard her, for they picked their flowers very carefully, and not a single tiny root was pulled away from the earth!

"Oh, thank you—you've been very good to me," cried the brave little plant after them. She felt very strong and very happy, though, of course, she missed her pink flowers.

But when the trees and the moss began to scold because the children had taken them, she laughed and told them to wait a bit—the woods would be so full of other flowers, they'd forget about her!

And the other flowers came, of course, lots of them, and the woods were very gay, but Trailing Arbutus was wrong in one thing—the trees and the moss did not forget her.

They just helped her grow strong, so she could give them her lovely pink flowers another spring. For they loved her the best of all.



RABBITS

A bright quarter of a dollar was snug-
gling safe in Harry's pocket. As it was
the first one which he had ever been able
to call his own, we may be certain he was
very proud of it.

How did it happen to get into his
pocket? Well in the first place, he
found a nickel in the middle of the
street crossing.

"I'll save this nickel," he said, "until I
find out just what I want most."

Then his uncle gave him a dime, and so he decided to wait until he thought of something costing fifteen cents.

The next day as he was coming home from school the grocer gave him ten cents for carrying some goods to a lady who was in a great hurry for them, and as she was a very good customer, the grocer didn't like to ask her to wait until the wagon came back to the store.

Harry was afraid he might lose the three coins, as he had no purse in which to carry them, so he asked the grocer to give him a quarter for them. "Because," he told the grocer, "I can keep track of one coin more easily than I can of three."

His mother thought he had better put the quarter into his bank. But he said, "No, I want to keep it in my pocket until I see something that I want more than anything, then I'm going to spend it right away quick." He carried it about with him two or three days, every once in a while taking it out and looking at it to be sure that it was really there.

As he was coming home from school, one day, when he had owned his quarter almost a whole week, he met a neighbor boy carrying home a pair of beautiful white rabbits.

"Oh, where did you get them?" Harry asked at once. The boy told him and then added, "I bought them for a

quarter, and the man has a lot more at the same price." In an instant Harry knew just what he wanted to do with his beloved quarter; and without saying a word to any one he was off like a flash to the place where the rabbits were sold.

The next day was Saturday, so Charlie the older brother made a hutch in which the rabbits could live, and Harry was probably never any happier in his life than when he was watching that hutch grow into a home for his pets.

Charlie first dug a hole five feet square and two feet deep. This hole he curbed like a well by laying boards up the sides and fitting them together at the corners.

The lowest tier of boards was sunk

three inches in the ground so that the rabbits could not dig their way out of their comfortable home.

Charlie's next care was to give them a shelter from the storms.

He sawed an old kerosene oil barrel into halves, and making a hole in one of the halves large enough for a rabbit to pass through he turned it over a heap of clean straw, then he sawed a hole in the pen opposite the hole in the barrel, and in this way the rabbits could run in the barrel and sleep on the straw whenever they felt like it.

He next made a rack to hold their food so that it would not be scattered all over the pen.

This rack was made like those from which horses eat hay, but it was so small and light that Harry could carry it in one hand, and as soon as it was finished he ran off to fill it with clover leaves, dock leaves, and the leaves of the plant you call "cheeses."

The bunnies seemed very happy in their new home. The pen was so large that Harry could jump into it and play with his pets and as he spent every moment there, when he was not in school or doing things for his mother, the rabbits soon became very fond of their young master, would eat out of his hand, climb on his shoulder, and show in every way that he was a good master, and that

they loved him with all their rabbit hearts.

One Easter morning when Harry turned over the half barrel to put some clean straw under it, he was delighted to find four baby rabbits lying in one corner. Although he was so pleased he was forced to own up to himself that the little creatures were not at all pretty.

He took one of them in his hand to show his sister, but first turned the barrel back again and unstopped the hole from the pen so that the mother could get to her babies while he was away.

When his sister saw the funny little thing in his hand she screamed and ran away, thinking he was carrying a young rat.

“It might be pretty,” she said, “if it had some fur on it and had its eyes open.”

When the time came for the little creatures to open their eyes, they saw that one of them was blind, its eyes did not open.

Many people told Harry to kill it, but Harry would not do it. He said very sensibly, “He doesn’t know he’s blind, and I can take care of him, he’ll be just as happy.”

Which was very true. Shakespeare says in one of his plays:

“He that is stricken blind cannot
forget

The precious treasure of his eye-
sight lost.”

But we know this rabbit had never known eyesight, so he could not lose it, and as he could not understand human speech, he did not know there was a sense called "sight."



The Bunny Seemed Very Happy

Harry supposed he would always have to show him where his food was, and might perhaps, even have to feed him, but he soon found out that the blind

rabbit could smell just where the food was, and could get to it more quickly than the other rabbits did.

He could also hear his master's foot-step sooner than the others. So though one sense was taken away the other four were quicker and keener. Wasn't that wonderful? So after all, he is just as happy as his brothers and sister.

From "Runaway Nanny."

CLARA J. DENTON.





THE PICTURE ANGEL

Although the Picture Angel never moved and never showed the children that she was watching them, still she knew about the other pictures in the house.

Ever since she had come to that house, and had been hung on the wall over the mantel piece, the Angel had watched over the family.

There were many other pictures there in the living room and the children seemed to care for them very much. At least they decorated the other pictures



Ever Since She Had Come to That House



There Was the Picture of the Children's Great, Great Grandfather

from time to time, and the Picture Angel tried not to feel lonesome.

It almost seemed as if they hardly saw her, so bright and shining and pointing with one slender arm toward the blue spring sky.

There was the picture of the children's great, great grandfather, who had been a soldier.

When his birthday came, the children brought out a wide flag, starry and silken, which they placed just beneath the picture of this soldier, and they made a wreath of laurel from the woods to place on top of the picture frame.

And there was the picture of the Baby asleep in his watchful mother's arms.

At Christmas time the children did wonderful things for that Baby. They twined evergreen all about the frame and hung a bunch of holly at one side.

Then they set up a small green tree in the center of the living room and covered it with candles. When the birthday of that Baby, Christmas Eve, came, the room was darkened and only the lighted

candles burned, making a light that would please Him without hurting His eyes.

This was thoughtful of the children, but each time that they decorated the living room the Picture Angel hoped that they were going to see her.

Flags, and laurel, and greens, and lighted candles, and once there was a bowl of blue violets, because it was the mother's birthday! And each gift was for someone else beside the Angel.

So presently she gave up expecting any attention and just kept herself bright and shining with her straight, slim arm pointing toward the blue sky.

And after awhile the sky outside suddenly became as blue as a picture sky

and the grass was green and the flowers that had been sleeping in the dark ground all winter awoke and put on their beautiful colored garments.

“Easter!” said the children. “Easter Day has come!”

The Picture Angel looked down from her place on the wall when she heard the children’s voices, and what a surprise was there for her! The children had come with her own flower, white lilies, to decorate her. They had found out that this was her birthday.

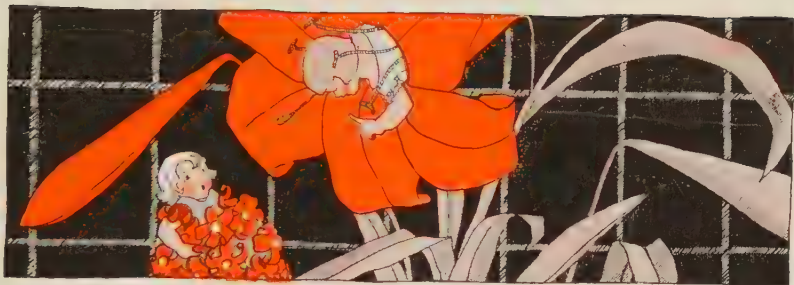
Even the youngest child was there with his bunny and another stalk of tall white lilies.

She was no longer forgotten. Really,

had she been forgotten at all? Covered with Easter flowers the Angel thought how much better they were for her birthday than any other decoration could have been, bright, shining Easter lilies, that had slept so long in the dark ground and yet found the way to the sun in time for Easter Day.

From Little Men and Women Stories. CAROLYN SHERWIN BAILEY.





Easter Is Not to Show Off Our Clothes

EASTER LILY'S SERMON

Once upon a time in Hot-house City, Flowerland, little Hyacinth sat on her tiny green stool, nodding to Tulip in a very earnest manner.

“It seems strange,” said she. “I have never seen Mr. Gardener so careful of our Flower-pot Houses, nor so kind to us.

“He keeps our houses entirely free from weeds, and he gives us all the water we need.

“What is going to happen?”

“Oh,” answered Calla Lily, “if you were an older resident of Hot-house City, you would know, my dear . Of course you have just come up from your winter home, Under-the-Ground, so you cannot be expected to know as much as we do. My dear, Easter is coming.”

“Easter?” asked Hyacinth. “What is Easter? A boy?”

Calla Lily looked surprised; Pink and Yellow Tulip hid their faces behind their green leaf fans; Red Tulip was surprised at such ignorance, while the Narcissus Children huddled close together and could not understand why Hyacinth did not know.

“Of course not!” explained all the flowers. “Easter is a day!”

“It is the day,” said Red Tulip, “we must look our best. I am so proud when I am taken to church and placed before everyone, so that I may spread my red dress as far out, as it is possible to spread it.”

“I shall not spread mine, this year,” answered Pink Tulip. “I mean to keep mine close about my body.

“Hyacinth, you will be pretty with that bell trimming all over your gown.

“I will be surprised if you are not most beautiful.

“They so often sing about Bells in the Sunday School where I stand.”

“The smaller flowers are quite restless!” said Calla Lily, with dignity.



My Dear! Easter Is Coming

“Hyacinth, above all be dignified! If you would only copy after me, you will not fail to make an impression. I am so sedate in my gorgeous white satin gown. And this wee touch of yellow I wear on my breast gives my gown such an air of elegance.”

“Vain one!” said Hyacinth. “Is that what Easter is for? To show off our clothes? I really thought all this care the gardener was giving us meant more than that.”

“Oh, it is not all clothes,” said a tiny Paper-white Narcissus Mother. “We have fun, too.

“Why, my six little petal children are always seated around the dearest egg-cup, holding three tiny yellow eggs.

“To tell you the truth, Hyacinth,” she leaned over and whispered, “these flowers think of nothing but clothes.

“Now I am only too glad to be able to give pleasure to my babies, and forget myself.

“My babies are just like the earth children. Easter is a time for feasting with them.”

Hyacinth wondered why so much should be made over Easter if it only meant fine clothes and lots to eat, when she heard a beautiful voice. She turned, and beheld the most gorgeous flower in all Hot-house City talking to her. It was Easter Lily.

“Dear Hyacinth,” she was saying, “Easter is not to show off our clothes.



Why So Much Should Be Made Over Easter

Easter is not to eat eggs. We are glad to have these things.

“I hope you will not get this selfish spirit from our dear, little friends, so soon after you have left Mother Nature’s simple home, and have come to our Hot-house City.

“There seems to be a selfish spirit in this close air. Hyacinth, Easter is the day of rejoicing.

“Have you forgotten that, Calla? Have you forgotten that, Tulip? Have you forgotten that, Narcissus? What we are to do, is not to show off our new clothes, is not to be greedy and eat all day, but to BE GLAD and REJOICE first of all.

“We are supposed to wear our new clothes because everything became new



How the Baby Chicks Burst the Shell

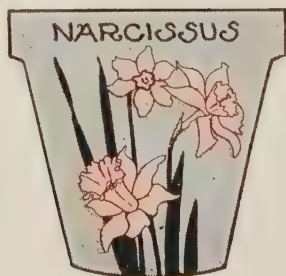
on that day; we are supposed to eat eggs because an egg best shows how life comes from darkness.

“You know how the baby chick bursts the shell and comes from the egg after being in there for so long. We are not to be proud and think only of ourselves and our pleasures, but to REJOICE and BE GLAD.”

When Easter came they were glad and rejoiced because the Lily had told them what the day was for.

From “Flower and Berry Babies.”

EDNA GROFF DIEHL.





EASTER MORNING

They had buried Him in the Garden of Joseph, in a tomb among the roses. It was quiet and cool there and those who loved Him might come to visit His resting place. Mary Magdalene was the first.

Dawn had just sent its first pink rays across the sky when she reached the garden. She had brought with her sweet spices, costly oils and baskets of flowers.

This would be her last little kindness to Him who now lay dead and buried. As she thought of it all, the tears came

into her eyes and with grief in her heart she went on.

Hardly had she reached the garden gate when she felt the ground shake beneath her feet. A rumble as in an earthquake was heard. Frightened, she paused for a moment, but soon all was still again. The birds sang in wildest joy as they floated over the buds and flowers, and she went on again.

There was the gardener and the guards that had been placed at the tomb, but what was wrong? Pale as death, they talked about something she could not understand.

Then quick as a flash, she knew. They were speaking of something that had happened to her beloved Master. She

crept closer and looking carefully, she saw the empty tomb.

The robes in which they had wrapped Him were there but the body was gone. She thought she must be wrong and looked again. She stood for some time keeping her eyes on the tomb.

As she thought that she could never see His beloved face again, or even touch Him, though in death, she burst into weeping. Never, never to see Him again! She stooped down to look once more into the tomb.

It had changed! Two silver-winged angels had come and sat where the robes had lain.

She was too shocked to speak and turned about. She would not leave until

she knew what had been done with the body. There she thought she saw the gardener again and she started to ask him, but he spoke to her first.

“Why do you weep?” he asked. The gentle kind words gave her a little hope. Her lips quivered.

“Sir,” she said, “If they have taken Him away, tell me where they have laid Him.”

Her only thoughts were to see Him just once again. She did not look up while she waited for an answer, her eyes were too full of tears. But she heard:

“Mary!”

She startled at her name for it came clearly from the lips of Him who had spoken it often before. The voice was only a little softer.

The head that had dropped so wearily was raised. She knew Him. The old grief made way for the new joy. Her memory was awakened by a sudden strong power. She remembered:

“I shall go, but in three days I shall come back to you.”

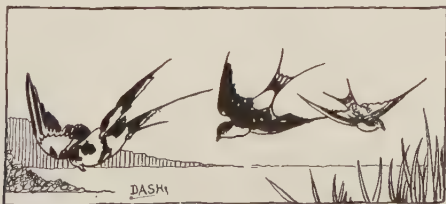
“Jesus,” she cried, joy springing wildly into her heart. Her Master had come back to her.

All the gray gloom turned to sunshine. Every nook and corner in the sweet old garden now awoke to the joy.

The birds sang their most beautiful songs for this was the first glad Easter morning.

From “Favorite Bible Stories.”

A. GERTRUDE KROTTJER.





It Was a Wonderful Thing That Had Happened This Day



THE MESSAGE

It was a wonderful thing that happened this day. All Jesus' favorites were hurrying to Jerusalem for Jesus had told them to come.

He had asked that they all be there for He had something wonderful to tell them.

They must have wondered what it was, and when they were all gathered, many curious faces looked on.

And suddenly as they looked there came something—something strange.

It was still a long way off.

If it had not been midday, they would have thought it was the sun just coming up. Now as it drew nearer they saw.

Into their midst Jesus came, looking beautiful and peaceful. He had changed so much. Yet they could all still see His old love and sympathy shining.

When He spoke, the words were not those of a man, but like those of an angel. His eyes shone with glory.

“Though you will see me no more,” He said, “I will be with you always, even to the end of the world.

“Go then and teach my people what I have taught you.”

He talked to them a long time about the work He wanted them to do. Many times He had charmed those who came to



DASH

To the Land of the Blessed

listen but never as He charmed them today.

It was God speaking, they knew.

He promised that wherever they would go, into the heathen lands, the busy city, the desert, in poverty or pain, He would always be with them.

Being told all that, it seemed to help make them ready for what was to follow.

A strange feeling came over them, as if a holy spirit had settled on them. Jesus had ceased to speak and as they waited silently, they saw Him rise up as if by unseen wings, radiant and joyful. Up, up, up over the gray olive trees, far above them.

Higher and higher and through the sunlight. They strained their eyes to follow but a cloud, like a bundle of white

wool, came and covered Him.

He had gone where there was neither cold nor hunger nor care, to the land of the blessed. They had seen Him for the last time.

Slowly His words came to them:

“Just as I go to my Father in Heaven, I shall come back to you.”

That was all they had to look forward to now and in the meantime they would work.

Oh! how they would work for their beloved Master till He shall come again.

From “Favorite Bible Stories.”

A. GERTRUDE KROTTJER.





"I Am Happy Today and Happy Tomorrow"

THE HAPPY HARE

"I am happy today and happy tomorrow,
Trouble I never stop to borrow,"

sang the Happy Hare one Easter morn-
ing.

As he was walking along he chanced to meet the Croaking Crocodile who greeted him saying:

“To be happy or sad I can’t decide whether,
I always worry so over the *Weather!*”

The Crocodile shed real tears and the Happy Hare said:

“We’ll go and seek the Weather Man out,
He would like to help us beyond a doubt.”

So, they went on a journey to find the Weather Man, and they met many animals as they passed along the Winding Road for half of a half of a quarter of a mile.

They bowed to all the animals they met and inquired what kind of weather they wanted.

Said Pussy Whiskers, "I like it dry,
Such wet weather makes me want to cry."

The Croaking Crocodile said:

"Join our procession—we've a plan,
We're going to the Weather Man."

So, Pussy Whiskers followed on behind, but Old Web-Foot the Duck had heard her remark, and as she thoroughly enjoyed wet weather she said:

"Pussy Whiskers, take your wish back,
I like wet weather, quack, quack, quack."

The Happy Hare skipped on ahead but the Croaking Crocodile invited Old Web-Foot to go with them, and they went on for half of a half of a quarter of a mile, until they met Chatter-Box, the monkey, who said:

“I’ll join your procession, like as not,
Oh, how I wish it would turn real hot!”

He was glad to go on the journey to the Weather Man. Next they met Snowball, the Polar Bear sighing:



“I come from a cold country as you know,
How I enjoy the ice and snow.”

Before the Croaking Crocodile could
make a remark

The Happy Hare said, "I do declare,
There's a difference of opinion everywhere."

Just at this very minute they met a
little old man in a little old brown suit,
carrying a little old brown umbrella.

They all bowed politely and said:

"Some day we will explain our plan.
Please lead us to the Weather Man."

To this, the little old man bowed
politely and said:

"The Weather Man is my own name,
Please tell me kind friends why you came."

The Happy Hare said, in reply:

"A Happy Hare with smiling face,
Enjoys the weather any place."

The Weather Man smiled and re-
marked:

“The Croaking Crocodile has such fears,
At times, I regret he sheds real tears.”

Then all the animals began to sing
together :

Pussy Whiskers said, “I want it dry;
Old Web Foot said, “For rain I cry”;
Chatter Box said, “I like it hot”;
Snowball said, “It will be icy like as not.”
The Weather Man in a brown study sat;
He said, “I’ll have to think over that”;
He ordered all kinds of *Weather* that day
And on a cyclone they blew away.”

The Happy Hare landed on his feet
after he had been blown half of a half
of a quarter of a mile, saying:

“Ha, ha, ha, let’s be happy together,
Every day in spite of the weather!”

The Croaking Crocodile remarked:

“I’ll shed some tears, I can’t decide whether
I like this, or that, or the other weather.”

Pussy Whiskers and Web-Foot and
Chatter-Box and Snowball sat down in
a circle and tried to get their breath and
they remarked in concert:

“Ha, ha, we’ll have all the fun we can,
In spite of the queer little Weather Man.”

Now, if one ever notices a day half
rain and half sunshine, half hot and half
cold, they will know that the animals
have gone to visit the Weather Man,

And if one thinks it worth their while,
They can chat with the Croaking Crocodile.

Perhaps if one wears Fairy Spectacles,
they can see the Happy Hare peeping out

of his wee little house in the woods, and
they may hear him singing, once as I did,

“I’m a Happy Hare, I can’t find out,
Why the weather’s a thing to worry about,”
Then he put on his cap and away he ran,
For a chat with the queer little Weather Man.

From “The Gingerbread Boy,” by Laura R. Smith.





THE HEN THAT LAID A GOLDEN EGG

Biddy Short-Legs was a hen of almost daily surprises.

She was a reddish hen with short, yellow legs, and Grandmother told Nancy, when Nancy came early in the spring to stay for a nice long time at the farm, that



That Biddy Short-Legs Was a Hen to be Depended On

Biddy Short-Legs was a hen to be depended on.

“She lays an egg almost every day in the laying season,” Grandmother told Nancy. “If you like, Nancy, I will put Biddy Short-Legs into your care.

“You may look for her eggs and I will use them for cakes and cookies for you.”

That would be fun! And Nancy needed something to make her happy there at Grandfather’s big farm.

It was so wide that she could hardly find her way about it. There was no other child for Nancy to play with. And the frogs, the early birds, and the wind in the trees sang in a lonesome way to her.

But each morning there was the joke that Biddy Short-Legs played on Nancy.

Yes, she was a hen who could play jokes.

She hardly ever laid her egg in the same place, and when Nancy did find it, why, Biddy would cackle in a cheerful, chuckling kind of way as if she were laughing.

There was the day when Nancy wandered through the new grass of the meadow down to the brook where the willow trees grew thickly.

And she was not quite sure which way led back to the barnyard.

Nancy almost cried, but she suddenly heard a merry cackle. There, in a nest she had made for herself in the grass, was Biddy Short-Legs with her daily egg. And she hurried home through the pasture, showing Nancy the way.

There was the day when Nancy wished she had something with which to trim her doll's hat for the spring. The farm was a long way from any store. "How beautiful that one yellow feather in your red tail is, Biddy Short-Legs!" Nancy said as she scattered corn for the hens that morning.

"Cluck, cluck," said Biddy, scratching the ground very hard, and all at once out fell the yellow feather from her tail.

It was her only yellow feather and she had given it to Nancy to trim her doll's hat.

Sometimes this hen laid her egg in a corner of the barn, and sometimes in Grandmother's wood basket at the back door.

Once Nancy found it in a pile of shav-



Nancy Almost Cried

ings in the woodshed. But one thing Nancy could be sure of, Biddy Short-Legs did lay an egg regularly.

The fun was trying to find it.

Easter came ever so late that year. The day before, Grandmother said, "Take my big yellow bowl, Nancy, and find as many eggs as you can.

"I will sew them up in bright pieces of calico and we will boil them in a large kettle to make colored Easter eggs."

So Nancy started out with the bowl and she found six eggs in a very short time.

But none of them was Biddy Short-Legs' egg. Of this Nancy could be sure, for the small red hen followed her clucking in a worried way.

It was as if she did not know herself where she had laid her egg and hoped that Nancy would be able to show her.

“Mooly-Cow’s stall, that corner back of the barn door, behind the feed box—” Nancy looked in all these places, but there was no egg there. Biddy was fussing at the foot of the ladder that led to the hay mow, so Nancy climbed up, although she had never known of a hen flying up so high just to lay an egg. And as Nancy reached the top, she had such a surprise that she nearly fell off the ladder.

There, in the hay, lay an egg that was just the size Biddy Short-Legs always laid, but it was a bright gold!

“There was a goose once who laid golden eggs,” Nancy said to herself,

hardly daring to touch it, "but it doesn't seem to me that a plain, farm hen could do anything so wonderful."

"She didn't. I painted it." The voice came from a merry faced boy in overalls who rose up before Nancy out of his hiding place in the hay. "That red hen laid her egg up here," he said, "and I thought it would be nice to make it into an Easter egg for you, I'm the new farm superintendent's boy, but I've been hiding because I don't know you. I'd like to play with you, though."

"Come right down and we will play," Nancy told the boy, putting the golden egg carefully with the others.



“I’ve been wishing I had someone to play with.”

And Biddy Short-Legs, watching them, gave a particularly merry cackle. That egg of hers had really outdone itself!



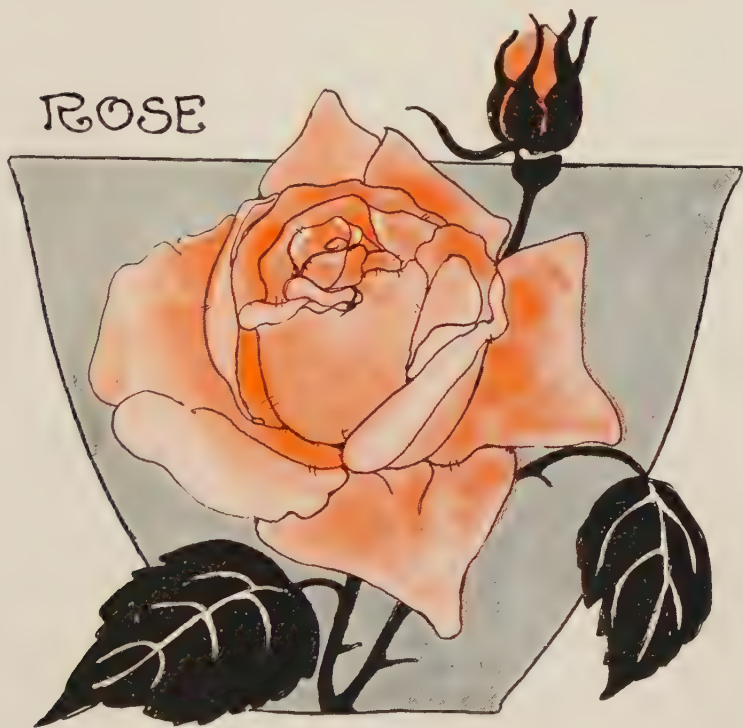
The Rain Did Not Want the Garden to Be Lonesome

THE LONESOME GARDEN

Deep down in their house of earth the seeds and roots of the garden were lonely.

They knew that some day they would bloom in pink and blue morning glories and red roses and gay sunflowers lifting

ROSE



their heads up so proudly toward the sun. But here, in the darkness of the ground, they were not happy.

They wished for company to share with them their cold, damp little rooms.

And the seeds and roots of the garden wished so hard for company that their wish was heard.

Crunch, crunch, they heard the earth all about them moving.

Down through the ground came the Earth Worm to visit the garden seeds and roots, digging his way and letting the fresh air in with him as he came.

The Earth Worm did not want the garden to be lonely.

The seeds and roots were glad to see him. They opened their doors and stretched up their arms to reach him, but they were not very much honored by his company.

An Earth Worm is a dull visitor to have.

Tap, tap, they heard the voice of the Rain.

Down through the ground came a host of small Raindrops in their gray capes and hoods, and as they came they moistened the earth around the seeds and roots.

The Rain did not want the garden to be lonely.

And the seeds and roots were glad to welcome the Rain.

They opened their doors wider and stretched their arms up higher to catch the little gray drops, but they still wished for company. The voice of the Rain was not as cheerful a voice as they would have liked to hear.

Warm, warmer, scorching; the seeds and roots felt the family of Sunbeams come down through the earth to call on them.

The Sunbeams were dressed for the visit in bright gold and they carried flaming torches to burn their way as they came.

The Sunbeams did not want the garden to be lonely.

The seeds and roots stayed a little while to thank the Sunbeams for coming to see them, and then they hurried away toward the air and light.

They thought it was kind of the Sunbeams to come down to them there in their home of earth, but they made the place uncomfortably warm.

Up, up went the bursting seeds and roots until they stood bravely above ground.

They stood there in their leaves, their buds, and their colors. The morning glories climbed above the wall.

The sunflower went up so far that she was able to see the road and all who passed by.

The roses opened their red blooms and filled the air with perfume.

The garden was now full of flowers and very beautiful, but it was still a lonesome garden.

It was alone from sunrise until sunset.

“Now I can go to a field I know where there is a farmer who needs my help,” the old Earth Worm could be heard say-

ing as he took his crunching, digging way a long distance off.

“I have done my duty by the flowers. I am all through with them.”

“*Patter, patter*, we will send our moisture to the other gardens farther away,” said the Raindrops as they sailed off in a soft, white cloud far up in the sky. “We have made our call on these flowers.”

“Now we are through with them.”

And all day long the sun shone on the garden until it was tired of the brightness and the heat.

The Sunbeams were dressed so much more gorgeously than they that the flowers began to hang their heads.

All the Sunbeams did was to shine and think how bright they were.

They made the garden droop and feel lonely again.

But one day, when it was summer, the gate to the garden opened and a Child came in.

“Now we will be picked and that will be the end of us,” rustled the flowers. But this did not happen at all.

The Child carried a large, green watering pot.

The stream of water that came from it was a welcome shower for the thirsty garden.

The Child's smile was more softly warm than the sun.



After he had watered all the garden, the Child raked the path and pulled out the weeds that were trying to choke the roots of the flowers.

He touched the blossoms gently and picked only one flower, a red rose to carry to his mother.

“Every day I will come out here with my watering pot,” the Child told the garden. “School is over now, and I will take good care of the flowers.”



"Every Day I Will Come Out Here With My Watering Pot"

How proudly and straight the sun-flower stood, watching the Child, and how sweetly the roses were perfumed for him.

Now the garden was no longer alone.

Better than its care in the earth, or by the rain and the sun, is the love for a garden that a Child can show.

From "Reading Time Stories."

By CAROLYN SHERWIN BAILEY.





AN EASTER PARTY

The Twins were invited to an Easter Party.

They received invitations cut in the shape of a Bunny and containing the following verse inside,

Bunny gives invitation hearty,
To a little Easter party,
Come to-morrow then at six,
At that hour Bunny plays his tricks.

(Hour—place.)

The guests arrived for supper to find little candy boxes shaped like Bunnies at their plates. After supper the hostess told this story of The Easter Bunny.

The Easter Bunny once made up his mind to give a party, but he was very poor so, Old Father Bunny said,

“What can you give for refreshments, sonny?

You are only a poor little Easter Bunny.”

Old Mother Bunny said,

“I think your idea is rather funny,

For you are a poor little Easter Bunny.”

Now the Easter Bunny wanted a party so badly he went out and told five and twenty other little Bunnies about it,

“Said one little hoppety, skippety Bunny,

I’ve a happy idea worth a mint of money.”

Then he told about hiding Easter eggs



The Twins Were Invited to an Easter Party

(for Bunnies always have plenty of eggs at Easter time), so all the Bunnies went home with the Easter Bunny and hid eggs all around his house. Back of things, and under things, and all over the house, just like this and they began to hunt with *one, two, three go.*

Here the story ends in a grand hunt and the children find candy eggs which they drop in a big basket as soon as found.

After all are found, an even number is given to each child.

The children may receive a large pasteboard Bunny to take home, on the back of which the story is written.



Every Boy and Girl Will Like the Companion Book to This Title
"MERRY CHRISTMAS" STORIES





MIL WINTER

